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ABSTRACT

High-quality leisure education programs for the elderly are few in number considering the size of the older population. Most existing programs are probably inappropriate for the elderly age group. Better perspectives and understanding on the part of leisure educators is needed. Leisure education programs for the elderly may become more plentiful and effective if the planning process encompasses insights sufficient to justify the need for such programs and the necessary funding. A working knowledge of how society perceives the elderly and their needs in later life is essential, along with knowledge of available resources to implement leisure programs for the elderly. Leisure educators should employ strategies from an adult developmental approach when planning such programs. Leisure programs for the elderly must emphasize the enhancement of the quality of life during the later years and empower individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to age successfully. (CB)

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Paper presented at the

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation,
and Dance National Convention

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Introduction

It is the author's contention that quality leisure education programs for the elderly are few in number considering the size of that population in our society. It is further contended that the nature of the existing leisure education programs may be, in most instances, inappropriate for the elderly age group. Why might this be so? The author is suggesting that it may be due to a lack of perspective and understanding on the part of leisure educators who have accepted the awesome responsibility of helping older adults make the most of their retirement years.

It is proposed that leisure education programs for the elderly may become more plentiful and effective if the planning process encompasses insights sufficient to justify the need for such programs and the necessary funding. A working knowledge of how society perceives the elderly and their needs in later life is essential along with knowledge of available resources to implement leisure programs for the elderly. The first step in program planning is to determine that a void exists which needs to be filled. Both governmental policy regarding the elderly and the concept of adult developmental theory may be the most effective tools for justifying need and expenditures. Once a program is justified and given the go ahead, the planning process may be enhanced if the leisure educator further employs strategies accrued from an adult developmental approach.

The author is suggesting three perspectives that leisure

educators need to be aware of when planning programs for the elderly; they are: the political realm, the realm of economics, and the adult developmental perspective. Leisure education attempts to serve a society which constantly strives to accommodate the needs of it's members at all different stages of life. It is important to realize that much of what transpires in society is directed by political and economic forces. A sound rationale for programming leisure pursuits in later life must be in sync with the political and economic flavor of the time.

"Mental and physical inactivity are the greatest obstacles to successful aging; the atrophy of disuse, the greatest thief of capacity" (Hentges, 1980, p. 26). For professionals in the field of recreation and leisure ~~this~~ statement underlies the basic premise in support of leisure education in later life. For professionals in the field of adult education, the same would hold true from a lifespan education perspective. A common goal for both is the enhancement of the quality of life during the later years, or in other words, empowering individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to age successfully. The author defines successful aging as the ability to adapt to the physiological, emotional, and psychological changes which accompany the aging process; thus enabling the individual to not only maintain former life patterns, but also to experience growth while continuing to develop to one's full potential, regardless of age.

Respectively, the fields of adult education and leisure maintain unique potential to provide the appropriate avenues for the achievement of successful aging. It is the author's contention that if professionals in the field of leisure came to understand the philosophical assumptions and underlying principles of adult education, then efforts toward leisure education in later life might be enhanced. One of the goals of adult education for older adults is to help individuals adapt to the myriad of changes that occur in later life. Another goal of leisure education is the nurturing of meaningful activity in one's life after retirement. Both goals are complementary and employ education as the vehicle for achieving them. Stated otherwise, leisure pursuits can often be those activities that serve to insure the successful adaptation to the many changes which accompany the aging process.

It is the author's sense that the field of leisure education is presently quite sophisticated in regard to the technical aspects of program planning for older adults. Yet, it has been the author's observation that quality leisure education programs for the elderly are few and far between and that the need for such programs is presently not being met. It is being suggested that part of the problem may be due to a lack of understanding on the part of leisure educators specifically in regard to the aforementioned realities; political, economical, and developmental. Considering these realities may help to: 1) ensure the

development of a sound program rationale based upon the need for leisure education found within an adult developmental context, 2) ensure a reasonable justification for financial expenditures based upon directives found in current legislative mandates regarding educational opportunities for the elderly and, 3) ensure a high level of program relevancy appropriate for the later life stage. Building these realities into the program plan from the onset may help ensure successful implementation. Each of these realms will be discussed in relation to leisure education in later life. It is hoped that such information will make a case for leisure educators to expand their program planning horizons to include information relevant to our present societal framework and the nature of the elderly population.

The Development of Governmental Policy in Regard to Education in Later Life

One essential aspect of program planning for recreation/leisure personnel is the ability to communicate to others the desirability of a specific program. In most agencies, there exists some form of governing board which maintains the authority to approve or deny funding for program development. Usually the task of "selling" a program concept lies with the designer of the program, in this instance, a recreation/leisure programmer. Where does one begin in attempting to communicate to others that a void does indeed exist in terms of providing services to the elderly?

The author is suggesting that the most logical place to begin is with the larger framework of the society. Since government attempts to serve society by accommodating the needs of it's members, what types of policies and directives have been established to achieve this goal, specifically in reference to the elderly?

It is interesting to note the trends in national policy regarding the elderly, specifically in relation to education. A historical perspective will be developed in an effort to better understand the development of such legislation. Policies reviewed are in relation to the continued education of the elderly, with special attention given to the increasing recreation/leisure concerns during the retirement years. Finally, an international perspective will be reviewed in regard to its directives for educating older adults.

As early as 1951, the First National Conference of Aging determined certain long range goals pertaining to roles in later life (Streib, 1971). Among those goals was one specifically targeted at the importance of spending leisure time constructively during the later life stage. Emphasis was placed on the development of personal resources within the aged themselves, by developing recreational opportunities within the community itself. Even then, there was a strong recommendation that those individuals planning such opportunities should be fully knowledgeable of the interests and capacities of older persons, thus suggesting the concept

that programs should be appropriate for the life stage of the recipient.

During the 1961 White House Conference on Aging, a Background Paper on Research in Gerontology: Psychological and Social Sciences, addressed the concern about retirement and meaningful activities. It was determined that how the elderly fill time is of significance not only to them as persons but also to society. The question of how to provide activities which could function as work substitutes became evident. It was pointed out that leisure takes on a different meaning as one ages. During one's work life, leisure activities provide temporary escapes, whereas during retirement, the filling of free time meaningfully becomes a central concern. The term meaningful was selected since it stressed the desirable characteristics of activities and programs that give older persons engaging in them feelings of involvement, identification, and self-esteem. Not only were programmer planners expected to know about the interests and preferred activities of older people, but it was further recommended that they be knowledgeable in ways of motivating and instructing the elderly.

Types of free-time activities were also addressed at this conference. Concern was voiced over the misconception that recreation for the aging is too often thought of as trivial activities, such as bingo, square dancing, and birthday parties. This serious misconception needed to be corrected if society was to appreciate the truly significant

contribution recreation could make to the abundant leisure of the aging. It was suggested that the greatest value of free-time activities was that "activity itself is an essential ingredient of successful living in the later years"

(Background Paper on Free Time Activities, 1960, p.3). The elderly were entitled to a number of assurances and one of them was the opportunity to do those things that enhance companionship, satisfaction, and happiness. Stimulating and creative activities were considered as important and necessary as other aspects of later life, eg. good health, adequate income, and decent living arrangements; and meaningful free-time activity was not to be considered secondary to them.

The Background Paper on Education for Aging, 1960, included an entire section entitled "Education to Enrich Leisure Time" (p.65). Concern was voiced over the potential meaninglessness of old age if individuals were not able to re-engage themselves in satisfying and meaningful activities. The fact that social isolation had been linked with mental illness was emphasized. One of the inherent problems highlighted was the fact that in the little schooling the elderly had received in their lifetime, it did not include much that could've been used to develop into leisure time activities. It was found that many educational agencies were beginning to feel some responsibility for the quality of free-time activities since too many of the activities were being perceived as "time killers" by leaders in the field.

Much of what had transpired at the 1961 White House Conference on Aging laid the groundwork for The Older Americans Act of 1965, also identified as H.R. 3708. The purpose of this historical piece of legislation, targeted for the older population, "was to create an operating agency known as the Administration on Aging within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare...to serve as a clearinghouse of information on problems of the aged and aging" (p.49). This agency was to devote its full attention to the developments of solutions to the social and economic problems confronting the elderly. In addition, the bill authorized funds for a 5-year period for programs designed to promote the well-being of older adults.

Title 1 of the Act delineated ten objectives for older Americans,

... the older people of the Nation are entitled to, and it is the responsibility of the governments at all levels to enable our older people to secure, equal opportunity to the full and free enjoyment of objectives in the following areas: (2) Best possible physical and mental health; and (7) Meaningful activity" (1965, p.57). Of the ten objectives listed, two were directly related to quality use of leisure time in old age.

Moving into the decade of the 70's, the White House Conference on Aging strongly echoed the concerns of the 60's and made further recommendations to enhance the quality of later life. It was encouraged that leisure education should

begin early in life and continue throughout life in order to provide opportunities for the acquisition of the necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge to assure successful aging. The development of such programs was to be subsumed under the jurisdiction of many different agencies: government at all levels, educational systems, religious institutions, recreation departments, business and labor. When planning such programs, attention needed to be directed at the lower income levels frequently found in retirement.

McClusky (1971), prepared an excellent background paper for the Technical Committee On Education in which he eloquently expressed the need for education in later life based on his Margin Theory of Needs. Using an adult developmental approach, he makes a case for helping the older individual adjust to and master the many profound and accelerating changes that occur both in society and within the aging individual. McClusky was one of the first to successfully employ the concept of life stage development in attempting to rationalize the educational needs of older adults.

In the Proceedings from the 1971 White House Conference on Aging (Toward a National Policy on Aging), motivation of the elderly is discussed under the section on education. It was hypothesized that, "in general, older persons do not perceive education as having any relevance for their interests and needs" (p.3), that they regarded education as separate and different from other programs and services with

which they were familiar. Such an attitude was based on their memory of formal schooling which bore little resemblance to their present situation. Professionals in gerontology were encouraged not to think of education

as a thing apart or as a decorative option, it should be regarded as a principal component of all the services designed to meet the necessities of living (1971, p.3).

Education was considered a basic right of older persons as a means of enabling them to have a full and meaningful life, and of helping them develop their full potential for the betterment of society (Proceedings, 1971). Recommendation IX specifically referred to the use of leisure, "Education must be directed toward an acceptance of the dignity and worth of non-work pursuits as well as development of leisure skills and appreciations" (Toward a National Policy on Aging, 1971, p.7).

Again, ten years later, the Final Report from the 1981 White House Conference on Aging included recommendations from the Committee on Education and Training Opportunities. Once more, strong language determining education to be an inherent right of all age groups and a necessity for survival, appeared in the text. It was emphatically stated that older people were entitled to a full range of educational programs in keeping with their needs and interests. It was recommended that programs to improve the economic, health, social functioning and life satisfaction of the elderly be given highest priority for funding which was

to be accessible to all older Americans immediately. Recreational opportunities were listed as one of the programs to receive priority attention. State governments were encouraged to strengthen their involvement by designating a unit of its government, working with education and/or aging, "to define and rank priorities regarding the educational needs of its older residents" (p.156). The committee report ended with a firm warning that "Exclusion of the aged from education and from training programs legislated for all citizens must cease" (1981, p.157).

Finally, it should be pointed out that efforts for providing educational opportunities for the elderly have also occurred on an international level. The Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging was adopted by the World Assembly on Aging held in Vienna, Austria in the summer of 1982. Specific Recommendations for Action regarding education were stated, three of which were: 1) programs featuring the elderly as teachers and transmitters of knowledge, culture, and spiritual values should be developed; 2) "As a basic human right, education must be made available without discrimination against the elderly" (p.43). Care should be taken to adapt educational methods to the capacities of the elderly. The need for continuing adult education should be recognized and encouraged; and 3) In accordance with the concept of life-long education promulgated by UNESCO, informal, community-based and recreation-oriented programs for the aging should be promoted in order to help develop a

sense of self-reliance and community responsibility.

Historically it is insightful to realize that for almost forty years, this nation has employed very strong and straightforward language regarding society's role in providing a quality existence for individuals in later life. Specifically, education has been identified as one of the most feasible and effective ways of helping elderly individuals age successfully.

Industrialization brought to this country a reduction in work hours, increased prosperity, an earlier retirement age, culminating in an increased amount of free time in the later years. At the same time, high birth rates in the 1900's, the influx of immigrants prior to World War II, and increased life expectancy for the young, escalated the number of elderly in the population. With more people living longer and retiring earlier, it became evident that previous expectations of old age were no longer valid since the very nature of later life had changed so drastically. The government responded to the need to help individuals age successfully by establishing governmental policies in this regard.

It is the government's response to these identified needs of the elderly that can serve as a basis for the justification of leisure education in later life. Policies have been established which identify education as a basic right in throughout the life span. It is also made explicit that the elderly are entitled to opportunities for meaningful

activity during the retirement years. In reviewing the development of governmental policy in regard to education in later life, it becomes apparent that society has made a written and verbal commitment to the elderly. Opportunities for leisure pursuits are identified as essential for successful aging in our society.

The Economics of Leisure Education in Later Life

Once a sound rationale, based on governmental mandates, has been created to develop leisure education programs for the elderly, the second most important aspect to be considered is adequate funding. No matter how well justified a program may be, if money is not available, the program dies on the vine. Funding is a reality that cannot be ignored when planning educational programs for the elderly, especially those of a recreational nature. Therefore, it is necessary for the leisure educator to be knowledgeable regarding sources of funding that may be available if the agency is unable to support the program.

Most of the programs for the aging, legislated by the U.S. government are funded through federal and state grant monies. It is interesting to note that for every dollar allocated for this purpose, only approximately .24 of each dollar reaches the elderly recipient. With the establishment of policies and legislation came the creation of a bureaucracy to disburse the allocated funds. The flow of money for older adult programming is as follows: the

Department of Health and Human Resources receives tax dollars which are passed on to the Administration on Aging; which in turn makes allocations to the State Departments on Aging; Regional Area Agencies on Aging are next in line; local agencies receive their funds and pass them on to the older adult via services and programs (Crane, 1987). Money tends to be eaten up at each level on its way down.

The Older Americans Act of 1965 instigated the creation of this bureaucracy in an effort to fund programs in nutrition, information referral, outreach services, education/training, transportation, and counseling. Understanding that the funding is limited, leads to a realization that programmatic priorities exist. Survival concerns like medical assistance, nutrition, and housing receive top priority and rightfully so. Successful aging requires more than mere survival but unfortunately the available funding is frequently eaten up by the immediate needs of the elderly. Funds to support educational programming to enhance the quality of life are scarce.

Storey, 1983, in his work entitled, Older Americans in the Reagan Era: Impact of Federal Policy Changes, explains the current status of the funding situation for the elderly. He points out that in the past fifty years, most Presidents came to office with at least a broad agenda of needed policy improvements that directly affect the aged. "President Reagan came into office with no such specific legislative agenda" (p.1). During Reagan's term, a number of program

changes have been enacted that adversely affect certain elderly recipients, particularly those with low incomes.

"Other changes will result in less future public support as younger cohorts reach old age" (Storey, 1983, p.1).

Add to this dilemma the fact that in 1985, over one-fifth of the older population were classified as poor or near-poor (A Profile of Older Americans, 1986).

The purpose of this discussion is to impress upon the leisure educator a few realities. First, federal and state funding for programs for the elderly have experienced significant cuts; second, available funding will be prioritized for surviving old age rather than enhancing successful aging; third, the elderly population continues to increase along with its many needs; fourth, a substantial number of elderly are existing at the poverty or subpoverty level. In planning leisure programs for older adults a dual perspective must be maintained in reference to economics. Available funding for leisure programs needs to be secured since it cannot be assumed that the elderly can afford to pay for such opportunities. A proportion of the older population can indeed buy leisure services but more of them cannot afford to. One must keep in mind that education is a basic right for all members of society, regardless of age. If leisure education is to enhance the quality of later life, then it must be accessible to all older members of society, regardless of income levels.

The leisure/recreation programmer should not become

defeated by the fact that funding for leisure pursuits in later life is presently not a priority due to limited resources. Some funds are available through grants that can be requested under the auspices of education for older Americans. Also, it should be kept in mind that an increasing number of private enterprises are beginning to show interest in supporting activities for the elderly as that population continues to grow. The elderly of the future will be healthier, will be financially comfortable, and will experience more years of leisure than previous generations.

Adult Developmental Theory

Assuming one has "sold" the program concept of leisure education in later life, and has secured the necessary funding to support the program, what does the leisure educator need to know in order to make the program relevant to the elderly individual? The recreation programmer should have a grasp of the complexities that make up what is referred to as later life, the retirement years, or the final life stage. It is essential to understand both the changes that are occurring in the aging individual, as well as how the changes transpiring in our fast-paced, technological society impact the life of the older person. Adult developmental theories offer a wealth of knowledge in this respect. The purpose of this section on adult developmental theory is to briefly review the origins of developmental theory and give a basic introduction to the two major types,

that of psychological development and social development. It is hoped that the discussion will bring to light what adult developmental theorists have identified as needs of older adults as they experience the later life stage and how these needs might be met through educational opportunities.

The idea that life is divided into distinct stages, each of which is age-based, has been around for centuries.

The Talmud contains a section called 'The Sayings of the Fathers,' which outlines the ages of human existence by describing various physical and psychological characteristics for each stage in the life cycle. Similarly, Confucius identified six stages in the life cycle, and Solon, a Greek poet and lawmaker writing in the seventh century B.C., divided the life cycle into ten stages of seven years each (Osgood, 1982, p. 66).

So too, Shakespeare's As You Like It, depicts seven ages of man that are specifically age-linked. Sigmund Freud is credited with being one of the first contemporary writers to develop a life stage model although it focused exclusively on childhood development (Osgood, 1982).

In 1936, Buhler presented one of the first sequential models of human development which extended into adulthood. Her work was to serve as a catalyst for the development of Erik Erikson's eight stages of ego development, in which the primary concern was with personality development over the life span. Subsequent developmental stage theorists have extended and refined Erikson's model (Peck, 1968; Gould,

1972; Levinson, 1974; and Sheehy, 1976,) but the basic notion that life is a progressive and continuously unfolding has survived (Osgood, 1982).

While these aforementioned theories focused on psychological development throughout the life cycle, other theorists have "concentrated on specifying various social tasks to be mastered or social roles to be performed at each stage of human development" (Osgood, 1982, p. 68). Robert Havighurst proposed a series of developmental tasks appropriate to the various life stages. He defines a developmental task as one "which arises at or about a certain period of life of the individuals, successful achievement of which leads to happiness and success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks" (1972,p.2).

These developmental tasks arise in most cases from physical maturation, from the pressure of cultural processes, and from the desires, aspirations, and values of the merging personality (Havighurst, 1952).

Combining the schools of thought proposed by both Erikson and Havighurst, a psycho-social approach to life development has resulted. Such an approach takes into consideration not only past life experiences but also what lies ahead. Life is viewed as a "changing, growing process, with periods of relative stability interspersed with periods of crisis or transition" (Osgood, 1982, p.70). Social

psychologists are also concerned with role involvement over the life span, as individuals interact within their personal and interpersonal environments (Gordon, 1971).

Adult educators have capitalized on the adult developmental approach in an effort to establish a rationale for the education of older adults. The concept of lifelong learning is based on the rationale that individuals must continuously adjust to not only a rapidly changing, technological society, but also to their own life-stage changes in regard to their psychological development, the successful execution of their life-stage tasks, and the fulfillment of their role in society. Proponents of lifelong learning espouse that education is the most appropriate means of helping individuals not only survive life changes, but to experience life to the fullest regardless of age. Peterson (1980), in Lifelong Learning in America, identifies the increasing numbers of older people as one of ten main lines of reasoning that could be used to advocate the expansion of adult learning opportunities.

Stubblefield (1981), contends that since adult education is usually defined to encompass all organized learning activities in which adults engage, the field of adult education does not have a major focus. He argues that the focus should be on life fulfillment but warns that,

Life fulfillment is not a condition or state for which one can be educated. It is, in a sense, a by-product attained when one finds satisfaction and meaning in what

one does (Stubblefield, 1981, p. 13).

In his study of adult education in the United States, Liveright (1968), found education for self-realization to be one of the goals of continuing education. It included education for leisure and retirement and fulfillment of a person's potential as an individual. In a similar vein, Marcus and Havighurst (1980), stipulated that objectives of education for the aging included practically all that would be specified for younger learners and added: 1) exercising body and mind to keep the elderly alert and; 2) adequate use of the vastly increased leisure time following retirement.

McClusky, in his background paper on education prepared for the 1971 White House Conference on Aging, stresses that "learning must be as continuous as change itself and inevitably lifelong in character" (p.1). He further contends that if,

learning is an attempt to adjust to and master change both within and without the individual, and, if that learning is to be relevant to one's particular situation, any consideration of the educational needs of the older person must, without compromise, confront the realities of the multiple impact of change inherent in the stage of the life cycle which older people occupy (McClusky, 1971, p.1).

McClusky proposes his Theory of Margin in order to establish a central theme upon which the needs of the elderly could be structured. "According to this theory, older people

are constantly engaged in a struggle to maintain the margin of energy and power they have enjoyed in earlier years" (1971, p.1). Margin, in this instance, is a function of the relationship of load to power, with load defined as self and social demands made on the person to maintain autonomy; and power defined as the resources and abilities available to cope with the load. The key factor is the crucial relationship between load and power. It is suggested that the major task of later life is to maintain a favorable margin of power over load. The nature of how this ratio is maintained may well be the key to continuing development in older people.

In analyzing the educational needs of the aging, McClusky (1971), proposes a range of needs from minimal, as in survival, to optimal, as in personal growth and development. Four categories of needs are proposed which include coping, expressive, contributive, and influence. The need to educate for physical fitness is stressed as a priority under the category of coping needs. "The category of expressive needs is based on the premise that people have a need to engage in activities for the sake of the activity itself and not always to achieve some goal..." (McClusky, 1971, p.4). Under this category falls the healthy expression of one's natural physical capacities, to exercise the muscles, and to employ the senses of sight, sound, and taste. The Theory of Margin, as proposed by McCluskey, takes into consideration the psychological growth of the individual, the

developmental tasks in later life, and the fulfillment of roles within society in an effort to establish the educational needs of older adults.

Keeping a lifespan approach in mind, Marcus and Havighurst (1980), eloquently contend that the best justification for expenditure to educate the aging is a guiding philosophy of development.

But the belief that the development of the individual is a lifelong process, never fully completed until terminated by death, implies that denying the privilege of continuing education actually constitutes a form of deprivation for many, which closes off opportunities to continue growing and thus can prevent them from achieving the fullest actualization of their capabilities. What kind of society would systematically refuse its members - all of whom age - the chance to realize their highest level of development? Not the good society that is everyone's goal (p.27).

This argument is further enhanced when one considers the fact that the elderly have already paid their way through their lifelong investment in work and taxes for which they deserve a decent return. "In short, education should take the major initiative in constructing environments through which people are helped with developmental tasks throughout the span of life" (Agruso, 1978, p.126).

Later Life Roles and Leisure

Based on adult developmental concepts, life roles change as one ages. Retirement is a life stage in which the individual is relieved of the demands of a full-time job and life takes on new meaning. The hours that once were committed to a full-time occupation are suddenly freed up to be used by the individual as need and desire dictate. Unfortunately, as alluded to previously, there has not been much in prior life experiences to prepare the older adult for their new found freedom. No longer being able to identify with a paying job, the older individual may lose their sense of self and become dissatisfied with this later life stage. What does the leisure educator need to understand regarding the role of leisure as it is perceived by society and the elderly themselves?

Regardless of the life stage, individuals are shaped by their former experiences in relating to the world in which they live. Since the elderly have lived longer they have accumulated a lifetime of experiences that serve to shape their present behavior and attitudes. For those 65 years and older, "survival of the fittest" was the popular social theory espoused by Herbert Spencer (as cited by Butler & Lewis, 1982). Success was achieved by hard work and self-sacrifice as depicted through the protestant work ethic. Many of the elderly "often berate themselves for not being allowed or able to work, since they were taught as children that leisure and idleness are sinful" (Butler & Lewis, 1982, p.31). "In place of work, an individual is offered leisure,

but our society has not yet legitimized leisure as a full-time pursuit" (Harris & Cole, 1980, p.70). As a result, although leisure time is increasing and activities are more readily available than in the past, many older people never strive to achieve the "good life". They may experience feelings of confusion, guilt, and uselessness when put in a position of increased leisure. These feelings are real and often a barrier to acquiring the skills necessary to use one's leisure constructively (Leclair, 1982).

The issue of roles in the life cycle is of grave concern in relation to the elderly. Robinson, P.K. et al. (1985), discuss the concept of the life cycle and how it rests in part upon the predominance of work or leisure in various life stages. They contend that the problem of leisure in relation to work/retirement is one of adjustment to the substitution of leisure activity for the work role which contributes to the familiar notion of the "roleless role" of leisure in retirement. There is reason for hope in this regard since "In the future, the adult life cycle may be less compartmentalized into work and leisure segments, and leisure may be less problematic for retirees..." (Robinson et al., 1985, p.512). Kaplan (1978), discusses leisure in relation to values and religion, and agrees that society's attitude toward work is changing. He finds it advancing toward perceiving work as a means and not as the total measure of one's life.

Expanding further the concept of roles in later life,

Kelly, (1982), suggests that an individual must be able to identify with leisure before it can be accepted as an integral role in one's life. Part of the problem with the place of leisure in later life is definitional. "When leisure is defined as left-over time, it is not likely to be given a central place in any analysis of human development" (Kelly, 1982, p.269). Only when leisure pursuits are identified as opportunities for expressive activity, or activity selected primarily for its own sake, can the full potential of leisure be appreciated. As one ages, typically the work role and family role changes, usually in the direction of fewer responsibilities. Yet, it cannot be assumed by those working with the elderly that this is indeed the case for all older adults. Consideration must be given to the changing relationship of work and family roles in later life, if the older adult is to be helped with identifying and accepting leisure as a legitimate, worthwhile means to successful aging.

Myers, (1994), discusses at length, leisure counseling and older adults. She poses the question, how can leisure make the lives of older people more meaningful?

The answer to this question becomes more clear if a life span developmental approach is used. Aging is one part of a continuous life cycle, a cycle in which growth and change is the norm from conception through all ages until death. The meaning of work and leisure changes throughout the life span and is not limited to changes

at the time of the retirement transition (Myers, 1984, p.174).

She suggests that it is the responsibility of the leisure counselor to help older adults obtain leisure and life satisfaction, or perhaps life satisfaction through leisure satisfaction.

Discussion and Recommendations

It was the author's observation that quality leisure education programs for the elderly are few and far between. Not only are they scarce, but the meaningfulness of some of the activities planned for the elderly have been perceived as questionable. It is suggested that the leisure/recreation programmer for older adults needs to be mindful of several important components in an effort to remedy the situation. First, justification for leisure education in later life is often required in order to secure approval and/or funding for such programs. By understanding the development of policies set forth by the government in regards to the elderly, it becomes evident that society has indicated a need for a commitment to improving the quality of later life for all individuals. The language in this regard is explicit and determines that the elderly are entitled to opportunities for meaningful activity in later life. Education is identified as the most feasible means of insuring the right to a meaningful existence in old age.

Second, although the language may be explicit and forthcoming, the government is not quite as generous in providing the necessary resources to implement leisure education programs. A creative approach to funding may need to be adopted as leisure educators explore the possibilities for grant monies and support from the private sector. This is where a sound rationale can make the difference between mere verbal approval of a program and the actual financing of it.

Third, leisure education programs in later life, based on a sound rationale and funded appropriately, can be further developed by employing some of the basic concepts found in life stage development theory. Much can be learned from the field of Adult Education as these practitioners have succeeded in demonstrating that many of the developmental needs of the older adult can be met through continuous education. By familiarizing themselves with theories of adult development, leisure/recreation personnel may expand their programming capacities through a more wholistic and thorough understanding of the elderly individual they intend to serve. The leisure educator should invest the time to learn about changes experienced by older adults and how the elderly individual is affected by our rapidly changing society.

Fourth, the role of leisure in later life cannot be overlooked, since how it is perceived by all members of society dictates how it is received. It is essential to understand how roles change as one ages and that a balance

exists between a variety of roles at all times. The role of leisure in general is beginning to be more readily accepted by all ages throughout the life span. But, for the older individual who enters the retirement years, a special understanding is required on the part of leisure program planners.

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